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The Star-Ledger

Pollution control job starts

EPA ordered paving at S. Plainfield site

By Bridget Malone
STAR-LEDGER STAFF

Work began yesterday at the Hamilton Industrial Park hazardous waste site in South Plainfield.

The federal Environmental Protection Agency found high levels of polychlorinated biphenyls in the gravel along the Hamilton Industrial Park's driveway, and ordered the site's primary polluters, Cornell-Dubilier Electronics Inc. and DSC of Newark Corp., to pave it.

DSC of Newark Corp., the site's owner, originally planned to have the driveway finished in May, but the first contractor it hired backed out after learning of the hazardous waste at the site.

Yesterday, a new contractor, Bellamy Brothers Paving, began to spray the driveway and surrounding soil to control the dust. The company also will erect fencing, install drainage controls for runoff and post signs to secure the site.

Environmental Protection Agency officials said the project is expected to take four to six weeks and the cost has yet to be determined.

"The steps we're taking now will make the place safe for the time being," said Rich Cahill, a spokesman for the federal agency. "The threat is not acute, but more long term. Our intent is to restrict access and direct contact with this material."

Rep. Bob Franks (R-7th Dist.) said he was happy to see the contractor show up and the clean-up finally begin. "I wanted to see with my own eyes whether or not the contractor had fulfilled its obligation to do the job," Franks said.

The contractor began working on the project by mapping out the area and clearing some vegetation, said South Plainfield Mayor Daniel J. Gallagher.

"They're going to pave over the areas where there is debris, so vehicles can drive over it and the dust doesn't blow up into the air or buildings," the mayor said. "That's the short term. The long-term goal is to make sure nothing ends up going into the Bound Brook stream."

The EPA is conducting tests on the water, fish and sediment from the New Market Pond, which forms the Bound Brook. The results are expected in mid-August.